

them to leave the country if their jobs ended and no other employer petitioned for a visa for them within 60 days. It would allow employers to bring in a large numbers of vulnerable guest workers to fill year-round jobs for up to nine years without the ability to be united with their family members.

Also troubling is that the Chambliss-Kyl amendment would broaden the definition of seasonal agricultural workers to include "related industries," which could include landscaping and food processing. Currently, the use of guest workers in these industries is capped and subject to additional labor market tests. The H-2A program is not subject to a cap. This further jeopardizes essential labor protections for a broader segment of the U.S. workforce. The Chambliss-Kyl proposal is bad for both U.S. and immigrant workers, bad for employers who want to employ a stable workforce, and it is a dangerous precedent in immigration and labor policy.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM SAMUEL,

*Director, Department of Legislation.*

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, this mentions:

The Chambliss-Kyl proposal would radically change the H-2A program, stripping it of all labor protections and Government oversight. This amendment would create a new year-round guest worker program with no meaningful labor protections and no role for the Department of Labor to enforce housing, pay, or other essential worker protections. The Chambliss-Kyl proposal would tie workers to particular employers and require them to leave the country if their jobs ended and no other employer petitioned for a visa for them within 60 days.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 464

(Purpose: To express the sense of the Senate on future requests for funding for military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq)

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, from the moment our military first attacked Osama bin Laden's hideouts in Afghanistan, through the time that our first soldiers set foot inside Iraq, continuing right up until the present day, the war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq have been entirely funded by what the American people might call a series of stopgap spending measures. These measures, which are called emergency supplemental appropriation bills in the parlance of our Nation's capitol, take the form of last-minute requests by the White House for Congress to approve tens of billions of dollars on an accelerated timetable.

From September 11, 2001, until today, Congress has approved \$201 billion in these appropriations bills, the great majority of which the President has applied to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. If this bill on the Senate floor is approved, it will add another \$79.3 billion to that staggering total.

With the cost of the two wars approaching \$280 billion—that is a lot of money; that is your money, Mr. and Mrs. American Citizen—the American people are beginning to ask how much more will these two wars cost our country? The Congressional Budget Office estimated, in February 2005, the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghani-

stan will cost the American people \$458 billion over the next 10 years. The \$74.4 billion in military spending contained in this supplemental appropriations bill is but a small downpayment on that staggering sum.

How accurate is this estimate of nearly half a trillion dollars more in war costs? How accurate is it? Amazingly, the administration has flatout refused to provide any estimates for the cost of the war in its annual budget request. That means, then, under the administration's budget policies, our troops are forced to continue to rely on the stopgap spending measures that are known as emergency supplemental appropriations bills.

I know the terms "supplemental request" or "emergency appropriations" mean almost nothing to the average American. But each time the White House sends a supplemental request to Congress for more funds that have never appeared in the President's budget, it reminds me of the way so many Americans pull a credit card out of their wallet when faced with unexpected costs.

Like a credit card, emergency supplemental appropriations requests can be responsibly used to cover costs that could not have been foreseen. But most Americans know, if someone starts using a credit card for everyday expenses, watch out, because that person is on the path to financial ruin. Mr. President, I have never had a credit card in my life. I don't use one. My wife doesn't use one. Using that little piece of plastic means avoiding the tough choices and tradeoffs that are necessary for fiscal responsibility, while reckless spending and increasing interest payments cause a family's debt to spiral out of control. That, in a nutshell, is exactly what is happening in Washington, DC. Just like the slick advertising slogan for credit cards, the administration's repeated requests for supplemental appropriations for the war exemplify the phrase "buy now, pay later."

Over the last 3½ years, at a time when the Government is swimming in red ink, the White House has charged an additional \$280 billion—that is right, \$280 billion—on the national credit card, without proposing a single dime of that spending in its annual budget proposal; not one thin dime is seen or shown in the administration's annual budget proposal. This is a reckless course the administration has plotted. It is fiscal irresponsibility at the highest level. This "take it as it comes" approach to paying for the cost of the war in Iraq ignores sound budgetary principles, and it is a grave disservice to our troops who are serving in Iraq.

By separating the regular budget of the Defense Department and other Federal agencies from the wartime costs of military operations, the White House has effectively denied Congress the ability to get the whole picture of the needs of our troops and the other needs

of our Nation, such as education, highways, and veterans medical care. Instead, Congress receives only piecemeal information about, on the one hand, what funds are required to fight the war—this unnecessary war, I say, in Iraq—and on the other, what funds are required for the regular operations of the Defense Department and other Federal agencies.

This is a misguided approach, and the net effect of this misguided approach is a thoroughly disjointed and discombobulated Federal budget. This hand-me-down process does not serve our troops well.

A unified, coherent budget for our military would allow Congress and the administration, as well as the American people, to focus on the future to evaluate what our troops might need to fight two wars—the war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq—in the next 6, 12, or 18 months.

I am fully supportive of the war in Afghanistan because in that case our country was attacked, our country was invaded by an enemy. We fought back. I fully supported President Bush in that war, and I do today. I support the troops in both wars, but I do not support the policy that sent our troops into Iraq.

Instead of looking forward, however, the abuse of the supplemental appropriations process means the Congress and the administration are constantly—constantly—looking backward over our shoulder to fix the problems that might have been addressed had the cost of the wars been included in the President's budget.

Congress has had to add money to prior supplementals to buy more body armor, to buy more ammunition, to buy more armored humvees. All of these costs should have been included in earlier administration regular unified budget requests for the entire Federal Government.

What is more, this disjointed manner of paying for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has a tremendous effect on the entire Federal budget. By refusing to budget for the cost of the war, the President is submitting annual budgets to Congress that are downright inaccurate. These budget requests are inaccurate. They understate the actual amount of our annual deficits by scores of billions of dollars.

If the President's emergency request for 2005 is approved, the Congress will have approved over \$210 billion just for the war in Iraq. While the budget deficit grows to record levels, the President tells us we have to cut domestic programs by \$192 billion over the next 5 years. The President tells us we have to charge veterans for their medical care, that we have to cut grants for firefighters and first responders, that we cannot adequately fund the No Child Left Behind Act, and that we should cut funding for the National Institutes of Health. The list goes on and on.

Since the President took office, he has taken a Federal budget that was in